

Boston, July 7, 1863.
Evening.

Dear Mr. Webb,

I said to Wendell Phillips to-day that you were desirous to obtain, for a friend, a Carte photograph of him, I asked him ~~if he~~ to tell me where I could get the best one, or the one he thought the best. He told me of some such, & said he would look at home & see if he could furnish me with what I wanted. A few hours later I rec^d. from him 3 photographs & a note in which he asks me to send them as presents to you. I accordingly do so, without loss of time.

And I give thanks to God on high, — not surely for the blood, the suffering, the mourning hearts all over the land North & South, — but for the great & glorious successes he has now given, or permitted, to the arms of the Federal Government, in the great and mortal contest of freedom with Slavery on this North American Continent. The papers, which will go to you by this same mail, (and I shall try to find ^a suitable one to mail ^{to} you,) will tell you. 1st Of the Surrender of Vicksburg on the 4th July (the Anniversary of our National Independence) to the U.S. forces under Genl. Grant & Admiral Porter — a splendid & thorough achievement, — officially announced. The Rebellion has had no such heavy military blow before. But this is by no means

all. The Army of the Potomac has at length fought its great victorious battle. Under General Meade it has utterly routed the great Rebel army which ventured to come again upon Maryland & Pennsylvania soil. vast numbers have deserted the rebel ranks, & given themselves up. A far larger number have been taken prisoners. A great multitude have been slaughtered on both sides, but (according to present accounts) a very great preponderance - more than 2 to 1 - being on the rebel side. The rebel army is in full retreat this moment & is endeavoring to re-cross the Potomac into Virginia, hard pressed by Genl. Meade, also by Genl. Couch (a Mass^{ts} man) now in command of the newly-raised Pennsylvania forces. If these two forces are sufficiently vigilant & co-operating, the prospect is good that the major part of the Rebel army will be entirely destroyed; - but as a considerable part of them have been retreating many days, there is much fear that many will succeed in getting back into Virginia again. But even in that case, as they are compelled to go by a circuitous route, they ought to be way-laid between the Potomac river & the City of Winchester (in the Shenandoah Valley) the present base of their operations, & entirely routed & broken. The chagrin of the Copperheads here is refreshing to see; their defeat is as sore & thorough as that of the Rebels with whom they sympathize. And

now we wait to observe how the British secessionists
and Slavery-men will take it, including also that
heartless & hypocritical wretch Napoleon, whose ears
shall tingle some day for the base, pro-slavery, & despotic
game he is trying to play on this Continent. — I feel as
keenly for poor Mexico, as I do on acc^t. of our own country.
We, hardly as we are bedstedd, are better able to defend
ourselves than Mexico, and he has to deal with our questions
more gingerly. But he is laying up trouble for himself
& his nation. —

Our Anti-Slavery men & papers one & all, without
an exception, repudiate Conway's course with Mason.
Our Framingham great Meeting, Feb. 4th, passed 2 resolutions,
unanimously, distinctly repudiating Conway.

I wrote to you briefly last week from Leicester, enclosing
2 photographs of Sojourner Truth for "the Dublin friend". In that
letter I spoke anxiously of the existing state of our affairs, with
Lee's immense army in Maryland & Penn^a. sold, and our Army,
in the very height of the crisis, obliged to change its leader!
What seemed so hazardous & even desperate, in a good &
wise Providence, has proved an immense gain, & seems now
to have been the very best thing wh. could have happened.
Meade has proved himself a wise, cool-headed, & competent
General. As Wendell Phillips said at Framingham, "The
Army of the Potomac has now a brave, an able, and a
sober General — the first it has ever had" — tho' in this I
think P. forgot Genl. Burnside, who (I believe) lacked

neither quality, but failed because of division
on political grounds among his officers, - some of them
since convicted of misconduct, & dismissed (I should
have been shot.)

But what of the 'Alexandra' case? To-day we
hear that the Court has pronounced judgment for her
The only ^{English} private ship which the Govt. stopped, & she released.
Well, there is room for progress yet. I see the Govt.
~~take~~ take exceptions; but with the unanimous verdict
animus of the Court, I consider the thing virtually decided.

And then the Polish question. That too is growing
tentative & bringing the clouds of war over Europe, and it
seems as if for fight. And the London Times, even, as
that England is in a bad position - to go forward is to get
a war, - to draw back is to lose honour. Well - Eng

has so conducted herself for some time past as to lose
& respect pretty extensively, - and with a class of people
who had honored her, on no selfish & merely political
The meddling classes of England, led by such men as John
& Cobden, must, if possible, uproot the power of the British
Aristocracy, or England has a dark future before her, as I fear.

July 8. The news from our Army of the 1st
continues favourable, & it certainly looks as if the
great invading Army had suffered entire defeat.

- I fear I may be able to send but 2 of the 3 photographs
Yours truly. S. May Jr.

MS. B. 1. 6 v. 14, p. 196